

Though in general society he was habitually silent and reserved, he was closely observant. It required generally a subject of more than common interest to produce the fitting degree of enthusiasm to animate him and to stimulate him into the exercise of his marvellous powers of conversation. When duly excited, however, his command of language was truly wonderful, his power of sarcasm unsurpassed; the readiness of his wit, the quickness of his perception, the grasp of mind that enabled him to seize on all the parts of any subject under discussion, those only would venture to call in question who had never been in his company at the period I refer to.¹

To Sarah Disraeli.

June 19, 1834.

I was at the Duchess of St. Albans on Monday, but rather too late for the fun. It was a most brilliant *fete*. The breakfast a real banquet; but I missed the Morris dancers, &c. In the evening at Lady Essex, where the coterie consisted of the new Postmaster-General and his lady, the Chesterfields, George Ansons, and Albert Conynghams, and Castlereagh. Tuesday after the Opera I supped with Castlereagh, who gave a very *recherché* party. Ossulston, myself, Massey Stanley, and a Forester, not Cecil. Wednesday a good dinner at Lady Sykes: to-night, after paying my respects to their Majesties at the Opera, I am going to the Duchess of Hamilton's.

I have had great success in society this year in every respect. . . . I make my way easily in the highest set, where there is no envy, malice, &c., and where they like to admire and be amused. Yesterday Lord Durham called upon me, being the first day he has been in town since we met. I was not at home; but this Lady Blessington told me. I am also right in politics as well as society, being now backed by a very powerful party, and I think the winning one.

A good story! On Monday, I think, Lady Sykes was at Lady Cork's, and Lord Carrington paid her a visit.

Lady C.: Do you know young Disraeli?

Lord C.: Hem! Why? Eh?

Lady C.: Why, he is your neighbour, isn't he, eh?

Lord C.: His father is.

1 Madden's *Countess of Blessington*, III., p. 81.

2 Castlereagh was afterwards 4th Marquis of Londonderry and Ossulston 6th Earl of Tankerville.

